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30 January 1983

Daily Summary of Positions on INF -- Classified Developments

Moscow Assesses Its Propaganda Effort

The Soviets appear to be pleased with the impact of their propaganda campaign in West Europe, and probably credit themselves, at least in part, for the recent flurry of public announcements by West European political figures calling for a reconsideration of the zero option or an interim agreement in the INF talks. The Soviets nevertheless also appear to be apprehensive about the Bush visit, fearing that the US will, in fact, emphasize its flexibility in the negotiations and, thereby, dispell the image that the US is not seriously interested in an INF accord. The Soviets are likely to seize on any such indications of US flexibility as an opportunity to appeal to West European publics for a delay in NATO's deployments in order to give arms control more time. However, the Soviets are also seriously concerned that, by emphasizing its willingness to entertain proposals other than the zero option, the US will be able to sustain NATO's commitment to deployment while pursuing a negotiated outcome. From Moscow's perspective, such a step could enable the US to "stall" the negotiations endlessly while NATO's INF deployments proceeded. []

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Summary of Public Positions on INF

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UK According to press reports, a "senior government source", has noted that, despite "occasional confusion" in the messages coming from Washington, "it remains clear that the US wants an arms limitation agreement." The source said that the visit of the Vice President to Europe will give him "a clear idea of the European position" and allow him "to focus ideas on the emerging consensus." []

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West Germany In an interview today in Welt Am Sonntag, Kohl emphasized that the West should "pay tribute" to "reasonable" Soviet proposals on INF. He said he intended to tell Vice President Bush on Sunday evening of the need for a US-Soviet Summit since "decisions on disarmament should be taken at the highest level" with details left for the negotiators. Genscher yesterday told his fellow Free Democrats that an "interim result" was acceptable at Geneva but that "the way should be kept open for continued negotiations to achieve mutual renunciation." []

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France Defense Minister Hernu yesterday again stressed that France would not allow the "overarmed superpowers" to take French nuclear forces into account at Geneva. []

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Warsaw Pact Poland and East Germany have followed Moscow's lead in publishing articles critical of the Vice President's trip. A Polish commentator yesterday questioned whether the journey was necessary. An East Berlin radio broadcast charged that the Vice President's intentions are "extremely shakey, demogogic and dangerous." []

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